

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 IO-11 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 /074 W

----- 116454

R 301421Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2302

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

USCINCSO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE TEGUCIGALPA 0501

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, ES, HO

SUBJECT: ARRIVAL OF OAS SEC GEN ORGILA AND FONMIN BORGONOVO
OF EL SALVADOR

REF: TEGUCIGALPA 0482 (DTG 291613Z JAN 76)

BEGIN SUMMARY: OAS SEC GEN ORFILA WAS FLOWN TO TEGUCIGALPA
BY FONMIN BORGONOVO ON JANUARY 28. ORFILA REPORTEDLY SAID
THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE SALVADORAN FONMIN IN HONDURAS
DEMONSTRATED THE IMPORTANCE BOTH COUNTRIES ATTACHED TO
ACHIEVING A RESOLUTION OF THE DISPUTE. FONMIN BORGONOVO
SAID THAT HIS VISIT WAS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE NORMALIZA-
TION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. BOTH DENIED
THAT INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE
NEGOTIATIONS. WITHOUT DOUBT, THE NEGOTIATIONS WILL NOW
BECOME THE TARGET OF MANY CRITICISMS, INCLUDING THE
CRITICISM THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS BEING FORCED TO NEGOTIATE
UNDER PRESSURE OF THE U.S., OAS AND OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN
COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

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1. OAS SECGEN ORFILA AND SALVADORAN FONMIN BORGONOVO ARRIVED AT THE TEGUCIGALPA AIRPORT AT 4:50 P.M. JANUARY 28. FONMIN BORGONOVO PERSONALLY FLEW THE PLANE TO TEGUCIGALPA TO BRING ORFILA FOR A SCHEDULED THREE DAY VISIT AFTER A SIMILAR VISIT IN EL SALVADOR. BORGONOVO HAD AN HOUR TALK WITH FONMIN PEDROMO AFTER ARRIVAL, AND LEFT TEGUCIGALPA AIRPORT EN ROUTE SAN SALVADOR AT 7:00 P.M. SAME EVENING.

2. THIS VISIT RECEIVED A GREAT DEAL OF MEDIA COVERAGE. ALL PAPERS CARRIED ACCOUNTS OF RESPONSES OF BORGONOVO AND ORFILA TO PRESS QUERIES. IN ADDITION, THERE WAS TELEVISION AND RADIO COVERAGE OF THE ARRIVAL.

3. IN THE AIRPORT PRESS INTERVIEWS, ORFILA REPORTEDLY SAID THAT THE PRESENCE OF THE SALVADORAN FONMIN WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE BECAUSE IT DEMONSTRATED THE DESIRE OF BOTH COUNTRIES TO ARRIVE AT AN AGREEMENT. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THE TWO COUNTRIES WOULD SUBMIT TO INTERNATIONAL PRESSURES IN REGARD TO THE DISPUTE, AND ADDED THAT THEY WOULD FOLLOW THEIR OWN INTERESTS IN REACHING A SETTLEMENT. HE OBSERVED THAT THE OAS WAS READY TO AID IN REACHING AN AGREEMENT IF HONDURAS AND EL SALVADOR BELIEVED IT WOULD BE HELPFUL; IN THAT REGARD, HE REMARKED THAT THEY HAVE THE SOVEREIGN RIGHT TO CONDUCT DIRECT BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT OAS PARTICIPATION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT HE RECOGNIZED THE DESIRE OF THE PEOPLES AND THE GOVERNMENT OF THE TWO COUNTRIES TO ACHIEVE AN AGREEMENT.

4. BORGONOVO REPORTEDLY SAID THAT HIS VISIT TO HONDURAS WAS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. HE STATED THAT A PEACE TREATY COULD BE SIGNED AT ANY MOMENT WHEN THE CONDITIONS ARE RIGHT. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HE COMMENTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO EXTERNAL PRESSURE EXERTED TO BRING ABOUT A NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS, AND ADDED THAT THE GREATEST PRESSURE COMES FROM THE KNOWLEDGE THAT AN AGREEMENT WILL BENEFIT THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL AMERICA. HE STATED THAT HE WAS INITIATING NEGOTIATIONS WITH FONMIN PERDOMO DIRECTED TOWARD REACHING AN AGREEMENT. SUBSEQUENTLY, FONMIN PERDOMO SAID THAT THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INTERVIEW WITH FONMIN BORGONOVO WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO REAL ADVANCES IN THE NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES.

5. COMMENT: AS COULD BE EXPECTED, THE DRAMATIC ASPECT OF THE VISIT ELICITED A GREAT DEAL OF COMMENT. THE RECENT MEETING OF U.S. AMBASSADORS IN GUATEMALA, THE VISIT OF USOAS AMBASSADOR MAILLIARD AND CEN DIRECTOR WEISSMAN, AND THE TRIP OF NICARAGUAN FONMIN WERE WIDELY BILLED HERE

AS RELATED TO AN ATTEMPT TO BRING ABOUT A SETTLEMENT.
NOW THE ARRIVAL OF ORFILA AND ZGRGONOVO HAVE CAUSED MANY
HONDURANS TO BELIEVE THAT AL LONG LAST REAL NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN
THE TWO COUNTRIES ARE UNDERWAY AND THAT THE GOH IS BEING
PRESSURED BY THE U.S., THE OAS AND OTHER CENTRAL AMERICAN
COUNTRIES TO REACH AN AGREEMENT. THIS VIEWPOINT HAS BEEN
EXPRESSED IN THE PRESS AND WAS EVIDENT IN THE QUESTIONS
ASKED OF ORFILA AND BORGONOVO. THE CRITICISM WILL UNDOUBT-
EDLY BE THAT THE GOH IS BEING FORCED TO AGREE TO A PEACE
TREATY INJURIOUS TO THE COUNTRY AS A RESULT OF EXTERNAL
PRESSURES. BOTH CHIEF OF STATE MELGAR AND FONMIN BORGONOVO
HAVE STATED TO THE AMBASSADOR THAT THEY ARE DETERMINED TO
SHOULDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATING AN AGREEMENT
EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE THE TARGET OF ALL KINDS OF CRITICISM.
THE PREVIOUS NEGOTIATION BETWEEN BATRES AND GALVEZ ON ONE
SIDE AND BORGONOVO ON THE OTHER HAD BEEN CONDUCTED SECRETLY
AND THERE HAD BEEN NO PUBLICITY, AT LEAST IN HONDURAS.
HOWEVER, THE DRAMATIC NATURE OF THIS TRIP, WHILE SYMBOLIC
IN TERMS OF EMPHASIZING A DESIRE TO RESOLVE THE DISPUTE,
WILL PERMIT OPPONENTS OF AN AGREEMENT TO SPOTLIGHT THE
NEGOTIATIONS AND MOUNT A SUSTAINED AND COORDINATED ATTACK
AS THEY TAKE PLACE. END COMMENT.
SANCHEZ

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